



Milwaukee County

Board of Supervisors

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For Immediate Release
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COUNTY BOARD ADOPTS FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE BUDGET FOR 2008

2007-09 State Budget creates opportunities and challenges for Milwaukee County

Milwaukee, WI – Last Monday, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors adopted a 2008 County Budget that restored funding to many programs and services demanded by County residents at recent public hearings. In adopting the Budget, Supervisors were both assisted and challenged by the 2007-09 State Budget, approved by the State Senate and Assembly and signed by Governor Jim Doyle last month.

Thanks largely to the help of State Senator Lena Taylor, who prioritized aid for mass transit, the State will provide all transit systems with a 2.5% increase in funding and \$3.2 million per year specifically for the Milwaukee County Transit System. This funding enabled the Board to restore more than a dozen transit routes without using additional property tax dollars.

However, the County Executive's 2008 Recommended Budget included overly optimistic revenue projections. In fact, several million dollars of State revenue never materialized in the final version of the State Budget. "Most notably, the County Executive was banking on an additional \$1 million in Youth Aids, \$2 million in Courts funding and \$1 million in Shared Revenue that, in the end, did not become a reality," said Board Chairman Lee Holloway. "The Board had to make up that difference by increasing the tax levy slightly, just to maintain funding at year 2007 levels for some programs." Youth Aids are not keeping up with the increased daily rates the State charges Milwaukee County to house juveniles in correctional institutions. "The cost to house one juvenile for one year is approximately \$100,000. You could send two kids to Harvard for that amount," Chairman Holloway added.

The Board also voted 13-6 to increase the County's contingency fund by \$3 million, primarily to mitigate the State revenues that never materialized and due to concerns that the County may not realize the County Executive's anticipated \$2 million in savings for replacing the Community Correctional Center with GPS monitoring. His proposal lacked a formal plan or bids as to the monitoring capacity, costs or enforcement of violations. The Judiciary, Safety & General Services Committee will review the initiative and provide further policy direction that may require additional funds in 2008.

The County Board will consider any vetoes from the County Executive in reference to the 2008 County Budget on Wednesday, November 14, 2007, at 1:30 p.m. in Room 200 of the Milwaukee County Courthouse.